

POLICY ADVICE ON REQUEST
TO NEW YORK STATE
DIVISION OF THE BUDGET

ALL FUNDS BUDGET REQUEST FY 2025 – 2026



Statement of the Agency Head



New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF BUDGET REQUEST

The Commission on Judicial Conduct (CJC) requests **\$9,330,000 in appropriations** for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26.

This increase of **\$430,000** (4.8%) will allow the Commission to continue rebuilding its once depleted staffing level, which had fallen from a high of 63 fulltime employees (FTEs) to only 38 FTEs in 2018. In its three offices – Albany, Rochester and New York – the Commission now has 50 FTEs, with a goal of 56, which would be a level commensurate with its exploding caseload.

There are approximately 3,400 judges and justices in New York State, all within the jurisdiction of the Commission, which is the constitutionally independent entity that investigates ethics complaints against judges, conducts evidentiary hearings and may caution, admonish, censure or remove a judge for misconduct or retire a judge for disability.

In the past two years, the Commission has handled over **5,400** complaints, conducted over **1,100** preliminary inquiries and investigations, and issued over **135** public disciplines or confidential cautions. It has also successfully litigated against numerous court challenges to its authority and decisions. This workload – the highest in the Commission’s 46-year history – caps a decade-long trend that requires more staff and has already resulted in expanding our hearing facilities and upgrading our IT capabilities with a versatile case management system.

The Commission’s budget is proposed to the Legislature in the Executive Budget, then decided among the Senate, Assembly and the Governor, following a presentation by the Commission.

The net increase of \$430,000 requested here represents 0.00018% of the \$239 billion All Funds State Budget. In this context, it seems entirely appropriate to allocate \$9.3 million for the lone entity empowered by the state constitution to investigate, litigate and adjudicate complaints of misconduct against judges.

Appropriation

The Commission requests a total of **\$9,330,000** in appropriations, which are separated into PS and NPS allocations as follows:

- (1) In Personal Service (PS), the Commission requests \$7,130,000 to support 56 FTEs and to allocate sufficient appropriations to pay the FY 2025-26 Management/Confidential salary increases.
- (2) For Non-Personal Service (NPS), the Commission requests a flat appropriation of \$2,200,000.